Trends in Education

First Polite Native. "WHO'S 'IM, BILL?"
Second ditto. "A STRANGER!"
First ditto. "'EAVE 'ARF A BRICK AT 'IM."

1975/3

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TOWARDS MULTICULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

The Nursery Education Research Programme

Authority in the secondary school

Schools and the community they serve

The passage from school to FE or HE

Trends in Education

SEPTEMBER 1975

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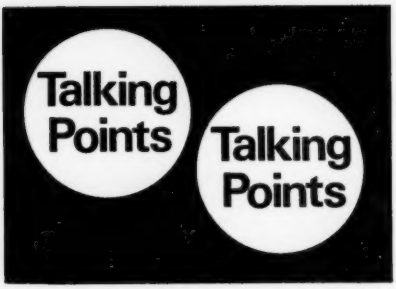


Education for some

Every Open University student is required to take at least one foundation course in either Arts, Social Science, Mathematics, Science, or Technology. Most students, in fact, are required to take two. According to the OU Planning Committee: 'The initial challenge that faces the academic staff is so to devise these courses that the whole of a broad field is explored in a way that will stimulate and excite students with very varied backgrounds; but that will, at the same time, make intellectual demands on them of the same order as the demands made by any normal first-year university course'. Each faculty, with the exception of the Education faculty, provides a foundation course. Why is the Education faculty an exception?

Professor John Ferguson, in his very readable book, *The Open University from Within*,* comments: 'I don't think any of us had realized quite what the demand for OU courses would be from practising teachers. When these turned out to be over a third of the original intake, it seemed essential to provide courses in this field. They might need updating in education itself. A foundation course would have been completely inappropriate'. Again, it would be interesting to know why.

It has not, for example, been beyond the wit of the Science faculty to devise a foundation course that is sufficiently demanding for scientists but is accessible to the layman. Is it beyond the wit of the Education faculty to devise a course sufficiently demanding for teachers but accessible to those who do not teach? By not providing a foundation course, the Education faculty is in effect discouraging anyone who is not a teacher from studying education courses. Such a policy seems on the face of it to run counter to the whole *ethos* of the University. No other faculty would claim this as a policy, even by default. At a time when most educationists are agreed that a knowledge of educational principles and policies should not be confined to the practitioners, it seems a pity that the OU, which has done so much to extend the horizons of higher education, should take so narrow a view.

But there is another danger. Teachers, in common with graduates and others who already have higher educational qualifications, can claim one credit exemption for every year of full-time study up to three. Thus, teachers who are two-year trained are allowed two credit exemptions; teachers who are three-year trained are allowed three. However, in both these cases, the University makes the award of one of these credit exemptions conditional on their taking a degree in educational studies. This seems an odd anomaly in the OU system and can only encourage the education courses to be even more exclusive than they need be. The door to the faculty of Education may in theory be open to non-teachers but it is discouragingly labelled, 'No admittance except on business'.

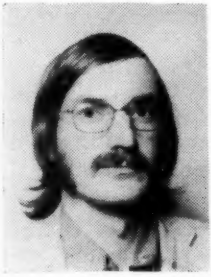
* Ferguson, J. *The Open University from Within*. London: University of London Press, 1975.

Towards multicultural understanding

In 1974 the Government's White Paper on educational disadvantage and the educational needs of immigrants (Cmnd 5720) was published. The Government, the White Paper said, 'attach great importance to the advancement of harmony between the races in this country's multicultural and multiracial society and believe that such harmony must be based on mutual understanding and respect. For the education service this implies that all pupils and students should be enabled to acquire a greater knowledge and appreciation of the cultural traditions of the countries of emigration as well as of this country, and to develop rational attitudes to race and colour'.
The following four articles will, the editors believe, contribute something of value to the debate.

Trends 1975/3

Schools and prejudice



ROB JEFFCOATE

Mr Jeffcoate is Development Officer at the NFER and is involved in the joint Schools Council/NFER project on multiracial education

On 15 December 1971, Lord Ritchie-Calder argued in a House of Lords debate on education in a multiracial Britain for a 'deliberate and conscious effort in our educational system to remove prejudice and promote understanding' in the further hope that this 'intimate concern' would extend as a 'sympathetic awareness of our wider multiracial world'. In so doing, he was giving flesh to the bones of Article 20 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and echoing the recognition, voiced in the same year by the DES Education Survey No. 13, that a vital aim of the English educational process should be the 'elimination or at least the diminution of prejudice'.*

The straight ethical objection to doing something in the school about children's prejudices is that, whilst schools are entitled to transmit the knowledge and skills they think pertinent, they move on to perilous ground and overstep society's brief in proposing to meddle with their pupils' attitudes. More widely subscribed to are the objections which envisage counterproductive consequences. Teachers of very young children and teachers in all-white areas, for example, sometimes say that problems of prejudice do not exist in their schools, and that any deliberate effort to eliminate or diminish prejudice could well run the risk of implanting vicious thoughts in minds previously free from them. Even schools with

* *The Education of Immigrants*, p. 11. London: HMSO, 1971.

avowed experience of interracial tensions fear they will be exacerbated rather than alleviated by curriculum intervention designed to promote interracial harmony. Scepticism of a different kind queries what the school can realistically hope to achieve in the face of the battery of negative external forces surrounding and influencing children from before their entry into the infant reception class.

Piecemeal strategies

The majority of strategies deployed in the past to combat prejudice invite scepticism. This judgment is not meant as a slight on the innovators, merely as a reflection on the situation that has so severely delimited the nature and extent of their innovations. No doubt, there is much to be said for the freedom which local authorities and schools are afforded by our decentralized educational system, and for the diversity of policy and practice it has generated. However, one unfortunate result has been the absence at national and local authority levels and, with a very few exceptions, at school level too, of anything approaching a 'deliberate and conscious effort' in the field of multiracial education. As so often, responsibility for innovation has devolved upon individual imaginative and committed teachers.

On the whole, their innovations have been by way of discrete programmes for adolescents. The most time-honoured have involved secondary school pupils in debating the controversial aspects of 'race' and 'prejudice' in their English, current affairs or social studies lessons. This is done in the expectation that the disciplined and rational ambience of the classroom, and the facts on immigration statistics or whatever, which the teacher is able to provide, will lead to their developing more 'tolerant' attitudes. Such evaluation as there has been of this problem-oriented approach hardly bears out this expectation.* Moreover, whilst it is important for secondary, and indeed junior age children to have the opportunity in school to talk out issues of race and prejudice, if the approach is the school's *sole* initiative, it is potentially harmful because of the wider currency and support it offers to the mass media's implicit correlation of black and brown people with problems. Although not open to this particular criticism, there has been equally little evaluation either of recent secondary school experiments in ethnic studies—whose overriding objective has been the rehabilitation of minority group self-esteem—or of isolated junior school programmes designed to teach the facts of racial differences or extend knowledge on the 'backgrounds of immigrants'.

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* See, for example, Miller, H. J. 'The effectiveness of teaching techniques for reducing colour prejudice'. *Liberal Education*, 16 July 1969; and Verma, G. K. and Macdonald, B. 'Teaching Race in Schools'. *Race*, October 1971.

We would do well, in this context, to take note of the evaluations of the multitude of American intervention programmes in intergroup education. These evaluations, though mutually contradictory over details, approximate to a consensus in two main conclusions. First, because prejudice is more than simply an expression of individual ignorance, a programme devoted to the imparting of information (about racial and cultural differences, for instance), whilst being a necessary ingredient of a more total programme, can never be sufficient for the alteration of pupils' attitudes towards other racial and cultural groups. Secondly, as far as pedagogic strategies are concerned, those that are oblique, affective, empathic, and simulative are more likely to succeed in their objectives than those that are direct, instructional and exhortative.* More broadly conceived than most are Gordon Allport's 'imperatives of intercultural education', which occupy two pages towards the end of his classic study† of the nature of prejudice. Some of its recommended techniques—simulation, enactment, and the use of literature and feature film—attempt to take account of the intense, emotional investment we make in the prejudices we all hold. Of special importance in Allport's statement is the emphasis laid on early and sustained intervention, and the insistence that the effect of the intercultural curriculum will be nugatory unless its social context—what would nowadays be called the 'hidden' curriculum—tacitly spells out the same message of intercultural respect.

The grounds on which one might criticize the existing educational strategies designed to combat prejudice are first, that they have been piecemeal. In confining their attention to a limited part of the curriculum for adolescents, and to isolated topics for juniors, they have taken cognizance neither of the early onset of racial attitudes nor of the aggregate of hostile pressures confronting children in the wider society. In being largely cognitive, concerned with information and, to a lesser degree, skills, they have neglected the significant affective dimensions to the way attitudes develop and are maintained. In usually taking the form of teachers trying to do things to pupils in lessons, they seem to have ignored the prejudices teachers themselves may harbour and, indeed, the institutionalization of prejudiced attitudes in the structure and organization of the school.

Theories of prejudice

The school's delineation of its role in combating prejudice will be decisively affected by what it thinks it is up against, what it takes prejudice to be: that is, not so much how it is to be defined in a formal sense, as how it arises, both in an individual and in a community, and how it is held, sustained and transmitted. The

* The evaluations are summarized in Davis, E. E. *Attitude Change.* UNESCO, 1964.

† Allport, G. *The Nature of Prejudice,* pp. 472-3. Doubleday Anchor, 1958.

main theories of prejudice can be divided into two broad categories, psychological and sociocultural. The psychological tradition, largely developed in response to the need to explain anti-semitism, holds that prejudice is fundamentally a personality disorder and that the prejudiced person is a distinctive type. The sociocultural tradition, on the other hand, argues that prejudice is primarily a matter of conformity to social norms and that, important as it is to know why one individual becomes prejudiced when another does not, it is equally important to be able to trace the aetiology of prejudice in a given community, and to identify the mechanisms whereby its status as a social norm is constantly affirmed. Social psychology aspires to marry psychological and sociocultural traditions in a more complete explication of prejudice's 'plural causation'.*

Whereas acceptance of the psychological tradition might lead teachers to believe they were only up against a small number of disturbed personalities, the sociocultural tradition strongly suggests that there will scarcely be a child in the school untainted by what is, after all, a social blight. Basic to the sociocultural tradition is the powerful conviction that xenophobia and ethnocentricism are normative in Britain; they have their roots in our history as a colonizing and enslaving power, and remain, in Allport's phrase, 'stitched into the fabric' of our society. It is this conviction which underlies scepticism about the effectiveness of piecemeal strategies. What it means, as far as children are concerned, is that the available prevailing images and judgments of other races and cultures are negative and derogatory; the sum of their messages asserts that it is good to be English and white, and inferior to be foreign and black or brown.

Children are socialized into ethnic prejudice in the same way as they are socialized into other attitudes—through the four main agencies of home, peer group, media and school. Research has shown that they are capable of recording, internalizing and reiterating the messages about other groups transmitted to them through these agencies by the time they start infant school. In multiracial communities, racial awareness has been found as early as 2½ and 3 years, elementary evaluative attitudes among 5 and 6 year-olds, complete rejection of other groups among children of 7 and 8 and, by 14, discernible adult stereotypes are beginning to appear.† Black and brown children, registering white society's, and particularly their white peers', negative evaluation of their colour—being, in effect, the recipients of prejudice—may well be brought to reject, or at least to develop ambivalent feelings

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* The various approaches are summarized in Allport, op cit., chapter 13. For a more recent version, with a different emphasis, see Hartmann, P. and Husband, C. *Racism and the Mass Media*, chapter 3. London. Davis-Poynter, 1974.

† Allport, op cit., chapters 18 and 19.

towards, their own identities and cultures, with sometimes disastrous effects on their performance and behaviour in school.*

A more comprehensive strategy

Given the normativeness of ethnic prejudice in our society and the overwhelming evidence of the early onset of racial attitudes in children, it is clear that more is required of the school than the isolated insertion into the curriculum of a multiracial or multicultural unit. Independently, a number of teachers and research workers have arrived at an alternative and more comprehensive strategy, which has been labelled and adumbrated in a variety of ways. The Schools Council Project, Education for a Multiracial Society, has styled the strategy 'permeation': what is needed is for the extant regular curriculum during the years of statutory schooling, or, to put it more broadly, for what happens to children at school in that period, to be permeated with an infusion of multiracialism and multiculturalism. The principle is most readily illustrated with reference to the youngest age group.

The images and experiences offered to infant-school children by their classrooms are typically all-white. The books they read and the stories they listen to tend to be about white people. Black and brown people are similarly underrepresented in the classrooms' visual environment. They appear neither in the pictures on the wall nor in the illustrations to basic reading and number work. Even when they do appear, it is usually as the kind of humiliating stereotypes to be found in library corner classics (such as *Little Black Sambo* and *Babar's Travels*) imbued with the values of the colonial era during which they were written and, indeed, in topic books on 'children in other lands' which continue to be published in the 1970s. In other words, the messages about black and brown people relayed to many young children by their classrooms may simply be a reinforcement of the messages they may have already received from home, community or the media.

In a discussion of the nursery school, Jennie Laishley has indicated some classroom changes that might be made. Toy materials, books and pictures could be used to introduce the 'naturalness of different skin colours', 'the fact that Englishmen may be white, brown, black or any colour in between' and 'the presence, in groups and in the population at large, of different coloured people as part of ordinary life.† She comments that it is just as important for children in all-white areas to be exposed to this process of 'familiarization'. It is doubly important, one might add, for black and brown children, as a result of 'familiarization' or 'permeation', to find their colours both acknowledged

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* Allport, op cit., chapter 8. For an important British study see Milner, D. 'Prejudice and the immigrant child'. *New Society*, 23 September, 1971.

† Laishley, J. 'Skin colour awareness and preference in London nursery school children'. *Race*, July, 1971.

and valued in the classroom. Increasingly, teachers of young children are taking the point (there were pioneers, of course, who anticipated it), both in accepting the theoretical principle that children of all groups need to meet things that they can identify with at school, and in translating this theoretical insight into, for instance, the school-based development of multiracial visuals. Increasingly, also, teachers are having their insight and industry complemented by the growing quantity of books and visuals commercially available, in which a deliberate attempt has been made to portray the multiracial nature of our society.

It would be mistaken to imagine it was only a matter of colour. Most minority group children differ from the majority population, itself culturally diverse, culturally as well as racially (and there are others who, like Ukrainians or Cypriots, though racially akin are culturally different). Within a multiethnic curriculum, informed by a global perspective and the principle of respect for all cultures, both majority and minority group children will benefit from discovering that these differences (as well as the humanity they all share) are understood and prized.* In secondary schools, the broad fields of the humanities and the expressive arts seem to provide the richest possibilities for incorporating the achievements of other cultures; so it is no surprise to learn, from Schools Council Working Paper 50, that subjects like religious education, history, geography, English and home economics have led the way in implementing syllabus changes to prepare pupils for life in a multicultural Britain.†

In addition, the penchant for integrated studies programmes in the first two years of secondary school could be utilized to engage children in an intensive study of one other culture, with the ultimate aim of their entering into an empathic understanding of its rituals and values. There is some reason for believing that this aim is more likely to be realized, and the principle of respect established, if the culture selected is 'neutral', in the sense of being unrepresented in the school's pupil population, simply because children of 11 and 12 will, in all probability, have already evolved fairly fixed notions, many of them the reverse of respectful, about the cultures they encounter daily.‡

On such sure foundations, more overt strategies for tackling prejudice will be less prone to counterproductive effects. Within the cognitive domain, older secondary school pupils will be

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* For the practical application of this idea with very young children see V. Glass. 'Multicultural Wendy House'. *Teachers' World*, May 1975.

† Townsend, H. E. R. and Brittan, E. M. *Multiracial Education: Need and Innovation.* Schools Council Working Paper 50. London: Evans/Methuen Educational, 1973.

‡ This point is argued at greater length by Margaret Nandy, in 'Social studies for a multiracial society', in *The Multiracial School.* Editors J. McNeal and M. Rogers. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971.

entitled to expect some kind of exploration of race as a salient political and social issue, and, in some cases also, ethnic studies courses, whilst even children of junior school age, Allport argues, are sophisticated enough to be alerted to the presence of stereotyping in the books they read and the films and television they watch. The burden of the American research findings adduced above, however, is that affective objectives demand affective methods, so it may well be that seemingly hazardous affective strategies, in particular simulation and sociodrama (as exemplified in the American documentary *The Eye of the Storm*), will secure the greatest impact.

What schools can do

Obviously the school cannot, of itself, eradicate an attitudinal norm such as ethnic prejudice, the roots of which are deeply embedded in our history and in surviving socio-economic structures: but this is not to say that it has no contribution to make. It is one, even if the least influential, of the four agencies whereby children are socialized, and the 11 years which children compulsorily spend under its aegis must leave some impression on their feelings and beliefs.

Up to now, schools have perhaps misconceived the nature of the response they can most appropriately make to an injunction like Lord Ritchie-Calder's. Even where they have seen beyond the piety of 'a caring ethos is enough', they have been inclined to interpret their function rather narrowly as challenging the prejudices their pupils have derived from the other socialization agencies, without first ensuring that their own houses are in order. Schools, whether multiracial or not, need first (and there are several which have already done just this), to take a good hard look at themselves, not only at the formal curriculum and the learning experiences they plan for their pupils, in the light of the images they purvey of other races and cultures, but also at the 'hidden' curriculum and the lessons their pupils are implicitly taught by, for example, the way power is distributed, discipline maintained, pupils grouped and parental wishes accommodated. In other words, and expressed most negatively, it could be said that, although schools cannot eradicate ethnic prejudice, they can, at the very least, make certain it receives neither reiteration nor confirmation in the overt or covert lessons they teach their pupils.

The multiracial school

B. C. HANKS

Betty Hanks was, at the time of writing, headmistress of Mount Pleasant School, Birmingham. This has just been merged into a larger, mixed comprehensive school, Highgate School, of which Miss Hanks becomes headmistress

Mount Pleasant School is an eight-form entry comprehensive school in the inner ring of Birmingham, with its population divided more or less equally into five groups: whites, West Indians, Muslims from West Pakistan, Sikhs from the Punjab and Hindus from East Africa. The proportions in these groups vary a little from year to year. The school, then, is a kaleidoscope of different coloured faces, of turbans, and the shalwar (the tight trousers worn with school uniform by Muslim and Sikh girls). What does this correspond to in reality ? How much separateness is there ? How much integration ? How much tolerance ? How much forcing into a common mould ?

The first thing one learns is the number of currents and cross-currents there can be. Tensions exist not only between whites and immigrants or between white, brown, or black students but also between a Barbadian and a Jamaican, a West Pakistani and a child from Bangladesh, a Brummie and a Glaswegian, and two Irishmen of different denominations. This multiplication of possibilities makes it even more important to make understanding and tolerance the cardinal virtues, by talking about them and practising them. The value of treating each person as an individual and not as a stereotype becomes even more apparent.

Organization of the school

The school is divided into Houses which are strong pastoral units. Here a pupil is known as an individual for the whole of his school life; the House is closely linked to his family because all his brothers and sisters will be in it. The mixed-ability tutor group into which he goes in the first year is his teaching group throughout that year in almost every case; in later years, it remains the social unit and for a good part of the week the teaching unit too. The tutor remains with the group for several years and so the pupils feel that they are well-known as individuals. Mixed-ability groupings, with a wide choice of options from the fourth year upwards, allow pupils to differentiate according to interest, but not to be labelled as belonging to a particular stream, with the attendant danger of different colours in different streams.

An important place within our curriculum is also given to activities, which can be for one group or for a mixture of ages; the whole school has activities on a Wednesday afternoon, which include games and various sports, many different crafts and hobbies, visits to theatres, museums, and exhibitions. These are interest groups, with a teacher whose behaviour can differ greatly from that called for in the classroom. It is important that expeditions, camps, and productions, cater for different interests and bring in different ethnic groups. The children understand the importance of dietary conventions and try to help each other over this; one third year tutor told me that a white girl and a black girl had been elected to buy the refreshments for the Christmas party. When they were going with him to the cash and carry, they asked if they could take along a boy whom we will call Mohammed Iqbal. The tutor agreed, and found that the three of them were carefully checking up on what would be enjoyed by each member of the tutor group. This seems a good example of what we would hope to achieve.

Curriculum

This brings us on to religious activity in the school. In assemblies and periods of religious education, constant emphasis is put on the many roads that lead to God and the good life, and on truth as the diamond, of which each of us see a single facet. This culminates in a fourth and fifth year course called 'The Four Faiths', which is taken by every pupil and leads for those who wish to do it—usually about half—to a CSE Mode 3; this requires a knowledge of all four faiths, and includes two projects, one on some aspect of the pupil's own religion, and one on a general moral question. At the end of most terms, we have a service which includes elements of different religions. A feature of our school has been multi-religious productions in dance, music and choral speech, on such themes as 'Light', 'Creation', and 'the names of God'. We also try to respond to needs that are perceived, for example, we provided a quiet room with running water each lunch-time during Ramadan so that a group of Muslim boys could make their devotional ablutions and say their prayers.

There are, of course, other implications for the curriculum as well as in the religious field. History and geography need to use the children's knowledge about, and interest in, different parts of the world; cookery, needlework, art and music need to draw upon their particular talents and cultural patterns. English has an even more important linguistic task to perform than in a school of entirely native English speakers; in literature, it is important to leave a great deal to individual taste so that a wide variety from different traditions is available and pupils can specialize as they wish. Within the option system, certain CSE Mode 3s have a particular significance—child care is one (and its

CEE sixth form extension, child growth and development) because there is the possibility of comparing and discussing different methods of upbringing. Pupils from the fourth year upwards do various compulsory non-examination modules which help them to understand society and themselves.

Pastoral care and the handling of children

Our pastoral care is firmly based on the House system, and on children being so well known that the Head of House knows how to handle any particular problem. We encourage children to talk out their problems and to try to see their own motives and we call in parents where necessary. Although, clearly, each child responds in an individual way, it is possible to make some broad generalizations. Generally, it is true that the West Indian child is lively and full of drive, but may also be aggressive and resentful, with a very short fuse; such a child needs a calm, firm, but pleasant and even genial approach. On the other hand, the Asian child is quiet and hardworking, but may be devious and need encouragement to join in cooperative ventures and to act for the good of the community rather than for himself. Very broadly, too, the children give in different ways—the West Indians in games and athletics, the English in service to the school, the Asians in high standards of work. Fortunately, these generalizations have a great many exceptions, so that there are no clear-cut distinctions.

We have a school counsellor whose main duty is to visit homes at the request of a child, a parent, or a Head of House, and to help discuss problems. She is accepted by people of all ethnic groups and can set up a good relationship with them. She and the Heads of House have very close links with the various agencies which are now beginning to provide students and trained people from the different ethnic groups.

Relationships with adults including parents

It is important that children should be provided with models from the minority groups, so that all children feel they have a wide variety of openings available to them. This means that the school should be a multiracial community, not only in child population, but also in adult population, whether teachers, ancillaries or manual staff. To see people from different ethnic groups working together in this way is the best example of how to live together that children can have. We are also glad to send our children on to various forms of higher and further education so that the others can see what it is possible for them to do, and we are beginning to provide young teachers who can serve as models for the future.

We find that parents are very ready to come to the school and discuss matters with teachers, sometimes on appointment, more often on a casual basis. They find it much more difficult to relate to each other. They tend to be, as it were, at the points of the star, looking in towards the centre, but finding it difficult to look round the corner to the next group. Nevertheless, in our area there is a good deal of neighbourliness between people of different ethnic groups, who are quite likely to take each other's children to school or do shopping for someone who is ill. This is something to build on and it can be encouraged through our own forms of community service.

There are certain stresses and strains in some immigrant families which need to be considered. In Asian families on the whole, there is a surprisingly long-term view from teenagers, who say things like, 'Of course I expect to have my marriage arranged for me, but I know my parents will try to do their best to match my partner and myself. However when my turn comes, I hope to allow my child more freedom'. In some West Indian families, however, there is a great deal of overt rebellion from about the age of 14, partly because the child wants to be allowed out in the evenings with his friends, partly because of the considerable physical punishment that is given earlier, and partly because the teenager often feels rejected by his family as well as by, in certain cases, white society. This can cause very tragic situations in which youngsters sleep rough, find themselves a room somewhere, and sometimes turn to crime or prostitution. The school has a very important and difficult role to play in trying to foresee where problems may arise and in discussing the situation with the parents, children and helpful individuals or agencies, in an attempt to prevent difficulties from arising.

One way in which we try to help race relations is by letting other young people from largely white schools, or students, or groups of adults, come to see what we are doing and get to know individuals from a different background. Our sixth form sometimes joins with such a sixth form from a very different school to do a project for younger children or for a disadvantaged group in the community. They also go out occasionally to give talks to sixth formers, students or adults on racial and religious questions, and do this in a very articulate and sensible way.

Accepting each other

There is a Youth and Community Centre on the school site, which tends to serve the population of this school as well as outsiders. In this context, young people seem to come together in interest groups (*e.g.* evening classes, games groups, hobby groups) but not for the more general discos, because of their different tastes in music and types of dancing. However, as long as these interests are provided for all groups, and they can be tolerant of each other's tastes, this is already something.

How far do we actually think that the pupils of this school have gone in accepting each other? The greatest barrier towards acceptance seems to be language, so that the sooner an Asian child becomes fluent enough to communicate with the others the better. The greatest help towards happiness together seems to be doing things together, whether in class, or through more informal activities, or in a joint residential experience. I think it remains true, that for the first three or four years of the secondary school, particular individual friends or groups of friends tend to be of the same ethnic group, although the different groups get on well together in class. After that, groups and pairs of friends are much more varied, according to interests, and there is a certain amount of visiting each other's homes across ethnic barriers, particularly for boys (Asian girls are kept so closely at home that this is much more difficult). On the whole, such friendships are not boy/girl ones, particularly not between Asians and others, although a platonic relationship may come from a close link, for example between head boy and head girl, or where a girl and a boy are doing the same combination of subjects.

Our aim for the children

This leads on to the question of what we are trying to do. We are trying to make all the children citizens of the new multicultural society which Britain is becoming, particularly in the big cities, and to give them an understanding of their own cultural background and an appreciation of that of others. In this connexion, it is impressive to see the pride of the whole school in our Gospel Flame, a choir of West Indian girls singing spirituals, who have broadcast on radio and on television, or in our Punjabi sixth form boys' folk dance group. The pupils also need an understanding of how their own gifts complement the whole, and the experience of working together for a particular purpose, whether work or play (or indeed a play—I think of Toad of Toad Hall, in which, quite by chance, Toad was black, Mole brown, Rat white). They need an understanding of their own dignity as human beings, and a pride in this which will resist those people who are patronizing or unpleasant. Indeed, we often quote the saying 'Stand here with pride'—pride in yourself and your upbringing. The girls need special consideration and encouragement so that they will be able to lead fuller lives than their mothers.

Teaching about the Third World

J. H. MUNDY

Mr Mundy is a Staff Inspector for External Relations at the Department of Education and Science

The world is divided between the rich and the poor—the poor being the under-developed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America—commonly known as the Third World. There is increasing recognition in international circles that the gap between rich and poor nations—between developed and developing countries—is widening. If no action is taken the gap will be half as wide again by the year 2000.

Do we too much neglect to teach about countries which cover nearly two-thirds of the world's surface and contain over two-thirds of the world's population? Could not more be done at schools to convey knowledge and understanding of the urgent problems and diminishing opportunities to reach an acceptable standard of life now facing most peoples of the Third World?

Methods of approach

Some styles of approach to teaching about the Third World are of doubtful value, a common one being the tendency to concentrate unduly upon its problems. This means reminding pupils of starving children, disfiguring diseases, shanty towns, droughts, floods, and often involves the use of harrowing pictures and films. It fails to present the more positive aspects of life in the Third World, or to present life through the eyes of its own peoples. Another approach tends to overemphasize the past and present exploitation by the 'haves' of the 'have-nots', to suggest that our wealth is at their expense and that we should give to the undeveloped peoples, not so much out of sympathy as out of a sense of guilt, and sometimes even out of fear that, if we in the rich world do not alter our ways, they in the poor world will rise in revolt and wreak a bloody revenge on us. Over-emphasis of the tragic dimension of the problems of hunger and disease can give pupils an exaggerated feeling of guilt. A more positive and lasting reaction than this is required. Good teaching should lead to an understanding of why the problems exist and what should be done about them.

It is important not to allow pupils to suppose that the issues are simpler than they really are, and equally important to challenge stereotyped thinking and lightly assumed attitudes of arrogance and patronage. Single events, such as a visit from an outside speaker, which bear little relationship to the rest of the

work of the school, will have a very limited effect on an understanding of life in the Third World. The current affairs approach which hooks sporadic, *ad hoc* teaching on to major news items more often than not concerning war and disaster, has all the disadvantages and dangers of inadequate, unrelated work. A more helpful approach, and one favoured by those who wish to promote improved race relations, is that which stresses the need to teach about the cultural background of the countries of the Third World. Even this approach can err when it concentrates unduly upon the folkloristic and the exotic.

The fact is that just as there is no single effective approach to the solution of Third World problems, so there is no single effective approach to teaching about the Third World. A combination of a number of the approaches described is probably required. Certainly extremes need to be avoided. The impression must not be given that the problems of the Third World are insoluble—nor must pupils in Form 4C be led to think that they can solve the problems of, say, Guatemala in a three-week project. Teachers need to make reliable information accessible to their pupils, to encourage them to form moral and critical judgments and to lead them to have confidence in their ability to help effect change and to participate in such moves for change as are appropriate to their interests and skills.

Content of teaching

It has been suggested that a useful formula for teaching about the Third World might well be: knowledge, judgment and action. Clearly the basic facts about the Third World need to be taught: income per head; dependence upon few commodities for export; neglect of natural resources; population explosion; illiteracy, and so on. It is important, however, to teach the *causes* which are both political and economic as well as the *consequences* of conditions in the Third World. The consequences—hunger, poverty and illiteracy—are plain to see; the causes are more complex. The 'inequality accentuation system'—how to a large extent the Third World is poor and likely to remain so because the rest of the world is rich and getting richer—how the present international economic system tends to increase the inequality between rich and poor countries—all this needs to be explained to pupils. The existing economic dependence of the Third World upon the industrialized world needs to be presented to them in the historical perspective of the imposed dependence of colonialism and neo-colonialism—while avoiding the excessively simplistic argument that everything is due to exploitation. The massive efforts the Third World is itself making to solve its problems needs to be illustrated. A growing attention to the ideas subsumed in the phrase 'intermediate technology' might be stressed. Pupils need to be helped to understand why it is so much harder for the Third World to develop today than it was for Britain and

other industrialized countries over the last 200 years. In dealing with British aid to the Third World, teachers need to explain how it is to our advantage, as a country dependent on world trade and exports, to encourage the development of poorer countries; how schemes for modernization in industry and agriculture in the Third World produce a bigger demand for our goods.

As far as the judgment part of the proposed formula is concerned, the teacher is dealing with the formation of attitudes—perhaps the most important and certainly the most difficult part of his work. Pupils need to be helped to acquire an open, informed view of conditions in the Third World and to develop moral and critical judgments on the rich world/poor world issues. Their attitudes towards the Third World invariably reflect those of adults, and can be nationalistically simplistic.

Well-planned work aimed at promoting mutual respect is required. Some Third World studies, however, can reinforce those attitudes which are the very opposite to those intended. Approaches based on well-meaning charity and compassion—or on stereotyped and factually incomplete studies, such as the Red Indian and his wigwam and the Eskimo in his igloo (still to be encountered)—can lead to the formation of patronizing and condescending attitudes. It is all too easy to give the impression that helping the Third World is largely a matter of changing its peoples so that they become like ourselves—whereas the real problem is one of changing ourselves so as to be able to understand those peoples. A positive feeling towards other life styles and respect for the ideas and opinions of other peoples needs to be engendered—and this can begin in the primary school; at the secondary stage, a discerning attitude towards information and its sources also needs to be developed.

From study to service

It is important to counteract the feeling some pupils may experience that the difficulties involved in trying to bridge the gap between the rich world and the poor world are too great. They must be helped to see that the continuation of poverty, ignorance and disease in large parts of the world is not, and must not, be considered inevitable. The study of the Third World should lead to a commitment to some form of long-term or short-term action. This can take a variety of forms: fund raising, personal service, informing the local community.

It is right and proper for teachers to encourage charity in their pupils, but they need to avoid leading them to see the Third World as a begging bowl. Pupils often express the wish to engage in fund raising. Preferably this should flow from their involvement in Third World issues and should relate directly to what they are studying and their view of priorities. Fund raising should not be the sole reason for teaching a topic. Support for a project overseas, linked with a study of why the particular project is

needed, is an appropriate lead-in for fund raising. The Unesco Gift Coupon Scheme and the Save the Children Sponsorship Scheme are examples of the kind of initiatives that merit support.

The Third World also needs help in the form of personal service just as badly as it needs financial aid. Not only qualified and experienced personnel are required, but also younger volunteers to help in the execution of projects and to contribute to the training of local people, so that undeveloped countries can build up their stock of qualified personnel. All the pupils might reasonably be asked to bear in mind schemes for voluntary service overseas operating for school leavers with a good academic record and for skilled young men and women in industry—recruited by the Catholic Institute for International Relations, International Voluntary Service, United Nations Association and Voluntary Service Overseas. As potential teachers and students in higher and further education establishments, they might usefully be informed about opportunities for service overseas offered by the Ministry of Overseas Development, the British Council and the Council for TETOC (Technical Education and Training for Overseas Countries) and by a number of religious and missionary societies. Schools can do a great deal themselves by organizing exhibitions, film shows and dramatic productions to inform and educate the local community about Third World issues.

Teaching about the Third World involves a willingness on the part of the teacher to seek, with the aid of his pupils, material from a wide range of resources. Old and inadequately revised textbooks often contain inaccurate facts, a lack of global perspective and ethnocentric attitudes which tend to perpetuate prejudices and stereotypes, and need to be used with care. A number of up-to-date textbooks are beginning to appear, but it takes many years for changes in world issues to be reflected in textbooks in general use. There are, however, a number of reliable sources of help and information about the Third World to which teachers can turn. Among these are the Commonwealth Institute, the One World Trust, Third World Publications, the Extra-Mural Department of the School of Oriental and African Studies, the Community Relations Commission and the Overseas Development Administration. The Voluntary Committee on Overseas Aid and Development is a coordinating agency for the major organizations committed to aiding developing countries and is possibly the best source of help and advice to be contacted initially by the teacher planning to introduce Third World Studies. The teachers can also profitably avail themselves of the first-hand experience of people who have lived and worked in Third World countries, such as returning volunteers and nationals of the countries concerned temporarily residing in the United Kingdom. Care needs to be taken to impress upon pupils that what such people have to say is an expression of an individual viewpoint and not an authoritative statement about the Third World.

World College

NOEL COWEN

Noel Cowen was until recently Chief Information Officer at the Department of Education and Science

In a centuries-old castle on the Glamorgan coast, an international community of scholars is at work preparing sixth formers to enter higher education and to contribute to understanding between peoples. Initially an elitist experiment, it is, from any of a number of viewpoints, a remarkable one, and its ripples could reach in time into the maintained schools of Britain.

Although only 12 years old, this sixth-form college of pupils from 50 countries (formally it is an independent further education institution) is already being copied in other countries, and may soon be seen to have been the British pioneer of a world-wide network. The United World College of the Atlantic (known more shortly as Atlantic College) opened its doors at St. Donat's Castle in South Wales in 1962. It was followed in 1972 by the UWC of South-East Asia in Singapore, and in 1974 by the Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific on Vancouver Island. On mainland Europe colleges are planned on the Adriatic coast near Trieste and at Edenkoben in the Rhineland.

The second remarkable thing is the teaching staff. Although only slightly, if at all, larger in relation to pupil numbers than most sixth forms or sixth-form colleges, it is drawn from east and west, from several linguistic zones, and from communist and Third World countries, as well as from Western Europe and North America. Because the teachers come on relatively short stays (from two to three years), there is a continuing freshness of viewpoint about why they are there; but all are committed to an ongoing search for international understanding through education. The visitor may meet in quick succession an historian from Ceylon, a physicist from Teheran and an economist from Malaysia, and receive a different impression from each about what the college may hope to achieve.

The third remarkable thing about Atlantic College is the student body. In the combined 1973–4 entries there were 62 students from the United Kingdom (54 on scholarship places) and 148 from the rest of Europe (including 23 Germans, 21 Italians, 18 Spaniards, 15 Swedes, 13 Norwegians, 13 Danes, 12 from the Netherlands and 10 from Belgium). From China there were 27, from Japan 14, from Malaysia 13, from Hong Kong 6, and from India 3. Canada sent 19 and the USA 17. There were 10 each from Latin America and the Middle East, 7 from Africa and 4 from Australasia.

The school is highly selective, on merit, and the merit is threefold: promise of academic attainment, aptness for community service (the college sea-rescue service has saved 70 lives off the rocky coastline) and an outgoing character (ranging from international commitment to being just a good mixer). Girls have been admitted since 1967 and now number more than a third of the total.

An international syllabus

The origins of the college lie back in the sixties in the NATO Defence College in Paris, and in the outward bound type of education associated with Kurt Hahn. It was a promising cross-fertilization, leading first to an international boarding school with a strong activities programme and calling for uncommonly resourceful young people. Mutation is already at work, and there is promise of a new cross between curriculum reform and what the college calls cultural shock. Some examples show what this means.

Not surprisingly, the history syllabus is global, with themes from contemporary world history. The economics syllabus, based at first on the mixed economy of a developed Keynesian society, has been pushed increasingly towards developing countries, centralized planning and socialist economics. (Five minutes with, for example, a Chinese, an Indian, and an Italian student can illustrate this point forcibly.) For environmental studies, the college has developed its own syllabus, plunging headlong across subject boundaries to get at issues like the use of planetary resources, population and control mechanisms, and industrial and domestic pollution. Even more closely at grips with the world we hope to go on living in is the first draft of a new syllabus in peace studies, where examples to be studied range from Northern Ireland and the Middle East to the conflict between rich and poor nations.

Behind these reconnaissances into what could become a world syllabus is a promising preoccupation with the nature of knowledge itself, the evidence subject by subject for what we believe we know, and the relationship between the evidence and the beliefs we derive from it. These dimensions are being forced upon the staff by the simple realities of working with impressionable and articulate young people from cultures of very diverse origin who are struggling towards an appreciation of the same global problems.

The International Baccalaureate

In this task, the College claims to be greatly assisted by a transition made in 1970 from the GCE to the International Baccalaureate. It has always been an overriding aim of the College to prepare students for entry to universities in their own countries. Although A-levels were acceptable overseas, the British examina-

tion system was found to be over-specialized for the broad range of studies which the College staff aimed to encourage. The IB, which came into existence in 1967 to meet the needs of pupils in international schools, allowed the possibility of some specialization without a loss of breadth.

A choice of six subjects is offered; three at higher and three at subsidiary level, success requiring both a sufficient total of marks and a satisfactory standard in each subject. The subjects are under six headings: two for languages in view of their importance for an international community; one for the study of man; one each for science and mathematics; and a sixth group combining music and the arts with subjects from the other groups. In addition, each student takes a course in the theory of knowledge.

The emphasis on languages is, of course, inevitable. Eight are offered at the higher level and several more at subsidiary level. Each student takes his own best language and a modern foreign language. Although all the students are of academic promise, their differing linguistic attainments on arrival give them something of the characteristics of a mixed ability group. Learning physics, for example, in a language other than your own can present some difficulties, and this may require both the equivalent of a crash course in English and some extra coaching in physics. In addition, the student body itself provides an educational environment in which bilingual progress takes place naturally.

The impact of Atlantic College

The students themselves identify as the most valuable part of their two-year course the opportunity of being educated for a time with young people from other countries. Realistically they accept that colleges run on these lines are bound to remain few, but they argue that some element of learning together, even for a month or two, is something that all national systems ought to plan for their teenage students, and they believe that such contacts should be less middle class. Modestly disclaiming that such encounters will make a major impact on world problems, they nevertheless argue that they are a contribution to the process of helping the young to bridge the ideological and cultural gaps that impede the search for solutions.

One is left wondering what impact the work of the College can have on the maintained system. Most of the UK staff come from and return to the maintained system. All but a handful of the English and Welsh students are now on scholarships from their local education authorities, either fully supported, tuition costs paid, or means-tested. The numbers are limited, not by the generosity of the authorities, but by the necessity to widen the student intake to include as many other countries as possible. But, not surprisingly, it has been the experience of the College so far that parents in the higher income group show more initia-

tive in applying for places, and a wider social spread is among the stated objectives.

The experience of the College with the International Baccalaureate may have some interest for an education service that has for many years been troubled by its sixth-form examination system and is still seeking acceptable alternatives. The changing nature of the sixth form, no longer exclusively concerned with entrance to higher education but pursuing also educational goals of its own, and the creation of sixth-form colleges with some, at any rate, of the attributes of Atlantic College, suggests that a greater knowledge of its work might offer pointers to developments elsewhere.

The College is anxious to increase contacts with the maintained systems in ways which might lead to a two-way flow of ideas and techniques, for example by an exchange of teachers along lines already explored with the Edinburgh authority or through some form of in-service training. It would certainly be a pity if the contribution of the College to the growth of international understanding and its implications for educational objectives were to be limited, so far as Britain is concerned, to the handful of students who gain scholarships there.

Trends 1975/3

The direction of the Nursery Education Research Programme

The Nursery Education Research Programme was set up by the Government to monitor the development of the new provisions for the expansion of nursery education.
How did the directors of the Programme set about their task ?

J. L. KAY

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The pressure for the provision of nursery education, to which the White Paper 'Education: A Framework for Expansion' (December 1972) was in part a response, was as much socially as educationally motivated. Not only had the Plowden Report lent support to the view that educational provision might be made in response to social need, but the urban aid programme was already directing the only new resources available for nursery

education into areas of social disadvantage. Under the urban aid programmes, a variety of remedies for social ills were tried and one sought to combine nursery education with more direct care facilities in combined nursery centres. Against that background, it is hardly surprising that the White Paper, in announcing a major expansion of nursery education, conceived the development of a variety of forms of provision and proposed to set up a research programme to monitor this and assess the effectiveness of nursery education.

Two months later, Circular 2/73 emphasized the content of nursery education and the teaching programmes which might be adopted. Clearly in mind were the American Head Start programmes, the EPA's Action Research Project and the Schools Council's projects in pre-school and compensatory education. The Circular promised that the Secretary of State would consult appropriate bodies before deciding what further research and development should be undertaken into content. When the consultation took place, it seemed that the purpose of the research programme should be to evaluate new developments, to support the best of them and to assess the longer term effects of nursery education. The Government seemed to be hoping that research might guide its policy towards a deployment of limited resources which would meet the various needs of the under-fives in the most effective and lasting way.

Possible approaches

If it were possible to establish what later long-term effects could uniquely be ascribed to the earlier experience of nursery education, then criteria might be established by which the 'best' developments could be identified and supported. Unfortunately, any large-scale longitudinal study, which might indicate some possible correlations between later benefits and earlier practices, would have two drawbacks. It would prove very expensive and would not produce any results soon enough to affect the relevant policy decisions. In the meantime, unless those responsible for the direction of the nursery education research programme were to take it upon themselves to define, *a priori*, what should be the aims of nursery education, then a double evaluation would be needed of new developments and of existing practices. On the one hand, it would be necessary to find out what the particular institution or experiment was seeking to do, and on the other, to measure its effectiveness in achieving its aims. Both aims and effectiveness would be open to critical assessment.

If there was a constraint on any research proposals that they had to lead to some useful results relatively quickly, there was also the question of what would be the most appropriate and most potentially fruitful style of research. The traditional research method of assessing the effectiveness of an educational programme might well have begun with certain hypotheses.

Objective tests would then have been found, adapted or created, which could be applied before and after the experimental programme to establish or demolish each hypothesis.

The advent of the computer has made it possible, however, to amass information in advance of any hypothesis and by the use of statistical techniques to establish clusters of related variables. It is then possible to formulate hypotheses after the correlations have been established.

More recently, the practice of 'formative evaluation' has risen in popularity. This approach does not wait to see the end product but focuses attention on the process itself. Judgments are made with or without testing as the process develops, and the process is altered accordingly. Perhaps a balanced view of research methodology would not readily abandon all hypotheses in favour of the hope that a computer might identify some hitherto unsuspected cluster of correlates, nor entirely abandon objectivity in favour of sensitive insight.

From a researcher's point of view it might well seem right that he should be allowed to pursue the lines of research which interest him or which seem promising. He would only have to find some funding body willing to support his projects with minimum interference. Some would argue that this sort of freedom was essential for research to flourish. The relationship has been likened to the patronage of music where great works are more likely to follow from a composer's complete freedom to choose his own themes and style. Such an approach might appeal to a research council which would consider its funds satisfactorily deployed if any great research were to result; it is less likely to commend itself to a body needing the results of relevant research to enlighten policy decisions. There are those who would argue that when a government department spends public money it should specify quite clearly the exact questions to which it requires the researcher to find answers. In the Nursery Education Research Programme, the areas for research are determined by the outstanding questions which would affect policy.

The Management Committee

At the outset, the Nursery Education Research Programme could have been delegated entirely to a university or to a research agency but, instead, a consultative document which was circulated to local authority and teachers' associations outlined a system for controlling the Programme by the establishment of a Management Committee under Department of Education and Science chairmanship. It would include representatives of other research funding bodies and departments so that it could fulfil a coordinating function and help to avoid wasteful duplication of research effort. In order to restrict the Committee to a viable size it was further decided that other members would be invited to serve on a personal rather than a representational basis. In

this way, officers of local education authorities and practitioners in nursery teaching and teacher training were recruited. The Committee's other function would be to recommend to the Department research projects to be commissioned as part of the Nursery Education Research Programme. As it was not itself a research body or agency, the Committee would need to receive proposals from researchers wishing to have their projects adopted as part of the Programme. These would be considered technically as pieces of research as well as judged in terms of their contribution to the Programme as a whole. At its first meeting in February 1974, the Management Committee appointed a sub-committee of its members who were experts in the research field to give technical consideration to all incoming proposals and advise the main committee on their merits. Contact would be maintained with any project adopted by the establishment of a Liaison Committee to be chaired by a member of the Management Committee.

The Management Committee needed an established base of fact and a measure of current research opinion before it could embark upon its major programme. The consultative document had proposed some short-term studies which would include a review of recent and current research as well as some local studies in half a dozen areas carefully chosen to give a wide variety of provision and problems. In the event, the Social Science Research Council undertook to commission the review of research and the Management Committee approved the local studies for which two HMI were seconded.

Elements of the Programme

Even before the research review was available or the short-term studies team had reported back, it was clear that some particular areas of research would need to be included in the Programme. One of these—the evaluation of the combined nursery centres which had been built under the urban programme—was jointly commissioned by DES and DHSS from the National Children's Bureau. Another was the investigation of the aims of practitioners of nursery education, both as they conceived them and as they might be inferred from the actual practices within the establishment. Such a study was proposed by the National Foundation for Educational Research as was also a project to develop materials which could be used by teachers in assessing progress in nursery education. If nursery education is thought of as a compensatory activity, as historically it often has been, then one might need to apply norm-referenced testing. The aim would be to determine what, if any, aspects of a child's development fell below the norm and to restore the child to equality with his peers. If all nursery education is viewed in this light, the norm must be set by the normal home. But there was hardly any established knowledge about the way a child learns in his own

home, nor even what he does there, in his pre-school years. As such knowledge is also needed to enable a school to build upon the child's home experience, a proposal by Professor Hutt of Keele University to investigate this was readily approved. The White Paper, on the other hand, had expressed the aim of providing nursery education quite soon for all children whose parents wished them to receive it, within certain estimates of probable demand. This would make part-time nursery education, rather than home life alone, the normal experience of the pre-school child and would make criterion-referenced testing more relevant. If, however, one wishes to measure the personal development of the child, one is dependent surely upon some professed theory of child development. In an attempt to avoid this problem, Professor Hutt's proposal to investigate the way in which children learn through play, using techniques of observation developed for the study of wild-life in its natural habitat, was adopted as part of the Programme.

Future plans

The short-term studies team and the SSRC Research Review confirmed the importance of the two NFER proposals and it was agreed that these should be supported. Beyond that the Management Committee decided that priority should be given to supporting research in five specific areas. The first of these was a determination of the nature and extent of parental demand for pre-school provision, the question being not only 'how many parents want provision for their children?' but 'what sort of provision do they want for them and at what age?' Is the demand for part-time education, for full-time education, for education combined with care or for care only? Does the demand vary regionally, by social class or by the availability of local work for young mothers? What are the special needs for rural areas?

Two types of research might contribute towards answering these questions: one would be a sweep of a large-scale sample, if the right questions could be asked without an unacceptable escalation of the costs; the other would be a less representative but more intensive study in each of a number of local areas to determine parental attitudes in greater depth. The former might seem the more valid method but it has a number of demerits. Even supposing that it is possible to overcome the problem of having questions uniformly administered by a large number of assistants without incurring very high costs, it remains that even a large national sample may be made up of rather small local samples, yet it is the local community that must be satisfied by the provision. The intensive study in local areas might therefore be more helpful, especially if conducted in a number of such areas chosen together to provide a cross-section of the country as a whole. It is known that a number of local authorities have

mounted their own exercises to establish the nature of parental demand locally, and it might be that most of the work required in this area of research has already been done. Nevertheless, informed policy-making would depend on much of it being drawn together and complemented where necessary by further studies.

The second area was the determination of how local services for the under-fives might best be coordinated. This might be approached by focusing upon the individual child, considering existing provision in the form of nursery education, day-nurseries, play-groups, day-fostering, nursery centres or child-minding, and examining how different services might best be combined for children whose needs were both for education and care. Alternatively, the approach might be made by focusing upon the decisions to be made by local authorities and voluntary bodies in setting up the best combination of local services such as whether there should be an attempt to meet or to modify demand, at least by the dissemination of information about the variety of services available, so that parental choice could be better informed. It might be necessary to study what information authorities would need to attain the optimum use of their services, to distinguish which children were in greatest need as long as overall provision fell short of demand, and to ascertain the nature of that need. Even when overall provision does meet overall demand, it may still be necessary to encourage parents to send their children to the provision which is best for them. There are therefore two parts to the research required in this area which might be inter-related. One part could be undertaken by educational researchers and the other by a university department of social administration. If the two research teams were in geographical proximity, that would prove most convenient. This research might hopefully lead to some models of balanced and coordinated provision which could be established by local authorities in cooperation and monitored by the research team.

The third area was that of parental involvement in nursery education. There has been a great deal of pressure from many different groups to increase the degree and depth of parental participation in education and particularly in nursery education. Parents may be seen as resources to be educated and used to enrich their children's experience, or they may be considered to have a right to be consulted about the processes of education experienced by their children. Research might establish the direct effects of varying patterns of parental participation in the classroom on nursery children, taking note of the different responses of children whose parents do participate and of those whose parents do not. There would also be an interest in the effects of participation on the parents themselves and on other parents and the school. The teachers' attitudes would need to be investigated particularly if there were any implications for their training. This rigorous research might hopefully take the form of a series of

case studies which could form the basis for evolving criteria of 'good practice', by analysing the benefits and dangers of parental involvement and specifying why some approaches were effective. To establish the feasibility of implementing different types of parental involvement would, however, also call for developmental studies where the researcher, as well as the parents, might be encouraged to participate.

The fourth area was that of continuity and progression in the educational experience of the child in, and through, nursery and infant education. Some research studies have shown that initial gains by pre-school children as a result of special programmes 'wash out' when the children are followed up through primary school. This indicates the urgent need for research in this region so that each child can be helped to progress as continuously and as smoothly as possible during the years from three to eight. It is not suggested that there should be a deliberate preparation of children for their next establishment, but that each establishment should take careful note, and make use, of the previous experience of each child.

The fifth area concerns the problems surrounding the admission of children with varying types and degree of handicap to normal nursery classes. Research might establish criteria for the admission of handicapped children, or even examine the merits and demerits of integration itself.

What then has happened to the Nursery Education Research programme over its first 18 months of operation? At one level, it could be answered that it has acquired a Management Committee, a sub-committee structure, five research projects and a strategy for the deployment of its remaining resources. At a deeper level, it might be said that there has been a subtle change of emphasis from the quantitative to the qualitative. We might have started by asking 'how many parents will want to take up provision?' but now we ask 'which parents want what for their children, at what age and why?' Once the question might have been 'how many local education authorities take the advice of social service workers when allocating a totally inadequate number of nursery education places?' but now it is 'when the total provision is sufficient to meet demand, how will parents be helped to choose the most appropriate services for their child, and how will the local authority ensure the optimum use of the provision which it makes?' 'How many special nursery education places are likely to be needed for handicapped children?' seems now less urgent a question than 'what criteria should be used when deciding whether or not to admit a child with a particular handicap to a normal nursery class?' It might still be interesting to know 'how many parents are involved in each of the various types of pre-school provision?' but a better return for funds invested might come from asking 'what type and what degree of parental participation is it feasible or advisable to encourage?'.

Authority in the secondary school

Authority, it has been suggested, depends upon a complex form of negotiation between the parties involved. What tactics, then, ought teachers to employ in day-to-day school management ?

P. J. OSMUND

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Authority in secondary schools today must be both subtle and sensitive. Sweet reason may seem sometimes a very frail instrument, but it is the *reasonable* character of our arrangements which is ultimately their greatest strength.

If the climate of opinion in school is healthy, difficulties will disperse or become tractable soon after they appear. There is a fundamental need for social approval, particularly among teenagers, and if public feeling in a school is generally contented, the disruptive will not find the eager audience they seek. Children need protection from their own anarchy, and are thankful for firmness provided it seems also to be fair. Since ideas of fairness can be fostered, particularly through consultation, a school council or system of committees is needed, not so much as an outlet for complaints, but as a vehicle for day-to-day consultation.

A school counsellor is sometimes thought to be necessary to give a face to faceless institution; but a school has no business to be faceless, and no teacher can hope to evade some pastoral responsibility. On any staff there are, and ought to be, both hawks and doves. A school counsellor is most useful simply as a leader of the doves if he works not only behind a desk in a consulting room, but through many activities which bring him into intimate contact with the children. It is an aspect of human nature that normally these two temperamental types exist, just as there are fathers and mothers, policemen and probation officers, executioners and priests. Both types are as necessary on a normal staff as they are elsewhere, and the most difficult task of all for a head is to get the hawks and the doves, not merely to tolerate each other, but more importantly, to appreciate positively the contribution the other can make. When the hawks and doves exchange feathers, a staff is really in business.

Pupils will tend to have a favourable opinion of authority where it has not discriminated in a damaging way against any section of the school. It is extremely easy for a staff to fall into the trap of selection on the basis of academic promise or social con-

formity in the hope of setting standards. However, that act of selection implies rejection, so that a school must find ways to foster talent and virtue without appearing to favour individuals thereby fulfilling its legal requirement to meet each pupil's needs. There must, therefore, be some compensating offer of self-importance on an alternative scale of values for the non-academic and the socially deviant. We must treat them as individuals in the hope that they will remain as individuals and not merge into disaffected group opposition; treat them with respect in the hope that they will show respect in return.

The need for allies

Allies must be sought where they can be found. Everyone talks of the need for better communication with, within, and between, the various support services—the Educational Welfare Service, the psychological and psychiatric services, the social services, the probation officers and the police. The parents, too, are ignored at our peril. Home visiting by senior staff where necessary, to supplement the work of the Educational Welfare Officer, certainly pays dividends. Most problems brought into school by difficult children can be solved, helped, or at least contained, by contact with the home. But not all.

When one sees parents, ordinary working class parents, at meetings—dressed in their best, reasonable in their attitudes, more articulate and socially adjusted than their children—one wonders where all the awkward children come from. But come they do.

The parents want what we want. Even those, perhaps most of all those, who have a shaky control over their own children want, from somewhere, the magic of order. We cannot supply any magic, and we cannot expect magic of them. But they are, nevertheless, our allies. In the mass they have strength. There is a growing ground-swell of opinion that they want protection for their children against disruption and disorder. This feeling needs to be mobilized and to have a cutting edge. We teachers are, in fact, the only people who can call any assembly of parents, influence their thinking and allow them to voice their feelings. Too often when this feeling breaks into speech spontaneously, it takes the form of a clamour for corporal punishment, which is only a minor aspect of the subject, and the effect is lost.

Perhaps it is true to say that the parents have not yet spoken. They have, of course, voted with their feet for this school or that, but when they complain about a particular school, they are really complaining about their neighbours. They are asking in a confused and sometimes misinformed way for higher standards of morals from other members of society. It is, however, only through the expression of this demand that higher standards can

possibly come. No head need fear parent-power. A little generalship, and he has an army.

However, another, stronger, battle-tested army exists within the school itself. The power-house of effective, practical authority in a school is not the head's study, but the staffroom. The head may have, in the Articles of Government, a printed statement both comforting and alarming, that he is responsible for the 'organization, management and discipline' of the school. Staff may imagine that the head has, or ought to have, magic powers to avenge their humiliations. But whatever the legalities, the emperor has, in fact, no clothes except those furnished by collective convention, by the fact that staff and pupils treat him as if he had such power.

Staff do not generally realize that they have as a collegiate body in practice, real power of their own. Perhaps the best service a head can render his staff is to teach them their own power—the power of collegiate solidarity. It is sad if a head sits alone in his sanctum, with the responsibility for the discipline of the school, and a lot else besides, on his shoulders, only to become aware of what he regards as a hostile influence in his own camp—a mass refusal by a section of the staff to carry out this or that duty, to teach this or that disruptive pupil. These teachers are not in fact enemies, but allies. They express a deep-seated feeling, which is strong because it is shared: an insult to one is an insult to all. It is the head's job to bring the full force of this collective feeling to bear on the source of the displeasure. If this can be effected, staff morale is lifted. If it can be effected without confrontation, subtly and through multiple channels, there need be no suspension.

The power of solidarity

We are now talking about tactics, and principally about power-proportions. The odds of 30 to 1 against, accepted by the teacher in the classroom, are normal battle odds in a school. But this balance can be reversed if necessary. It only needs a staff of 30 to reverse it exactly—30 adults against one raw adolescent. If the head is interviewing a difficult character, and quite casually first one and then another member of staff drops in, coffee cup in hand, and is asked for his opinion of the scholar, by the time there are six staff in the room the point will probably have been effectively made. One pupil, or a handful of pupils, cannot take on, either physically or morally, the whole staff.

The individual must be taught that he is responsible for himself, and responsible *to* a number of people—his parents, his form tutor, his year, his master, his mates and so on. A very useful way of pointing this lesson is available after any minor misdemeanour. A written explanation, perhaps including an apology, is asked for and accepted. Fair copies are then requested for up to half a dozen interested parties; it is better than lines.

Sometimes an offence is committed at which the children themselves—perhaps the year group—are shocked. The power proportions are then very telling, with a year group of perhaps two hundred. To sit and listen to one's behaviour being discussed by one's contemporaries, in the hearing of all, is very chastening; though it is a method which must be handled very skilfully and only used on occasions when the subject is suitable. This is not quite a trial by peers, for no punishment need follow. But the medium could well be the message; public opinion is a very powerful sanction.

Occasionally a formal interview in the continental manner by an official panel of senior staff is appropriate. This would have something of the atmosphere and impressiveness of a court, but a gain in formality might mean a loss in flexibility; and flexibility is important.

The legal weapon of suspension must sometimes be used, but the problem is seldom alleviated unless the circumstances are right, and there is an agency—the parents, a social worker or probation officer—capable of holding up the other end of the operation. An unplanned suspension, the culmination of dramatic confrontation, may, in a crisis, be the only proper course, and to expect one's colleagues in other schools or rescue units to pick up the pieces is the necessary corollary. However it is better to avoid this.

Many schools now have 'refuges' or other internal arrangements for suspending a difficult child from the normal timetable; and the sooner this action is taken the better. Gone are the days when the novice teacher was expected to fight his own battles, when it was not etiquette for one member of staff to intervene with another's discipline. Better for a probationer to confess his difficulties in the early stages, so that his teaching may gain the necessary momentum, with the ringleaders of trouble temporarily removed. Even teachers of equal status can help each other by prior arrangement.

The concept of the power of collegiate solidarity is very old. There have been colleges of pagan priests, of cardinals, dons, lawyers and merchants, throughout history. But the idea of a team approach is now spreading through all work-a-day situations. We have it with scientific enterprises, architecture, the social services—and now it is coming into factories. Schools have *got* to find the answers to their problems. Perhaps a renewal of confidence on this basis is one of them.

Schools and the community they serve

There still seems to be some doubt as to the value of community service by schools. Is it simply a convenient way of filling time for the less able, or can it serve some more useful purpose? How can schools organize their involvement in the community effectively?

G. R. EUSTANCE

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In one of her fascinating descriptions of the community development process, Margaret Simey used the phrase 'social knitting' to present a verbal image. She was trying to avoid the too frequent use of the word 'links' between groups and individuals, since this implies an exclusive and direct tie; social knitting on the other hand, suggests that groups of people in the community are connected by a web of horizontal and vertical lines of social, religious and friendship implication. The DES publication, 'Community Service in Education',* on which I wish to comment, does rather simplify the process by referring to community service somewhat in isolation from the other equally powerful factors intrinsic to the nature of the community. Many people are currently enquiring into the phenomenon of the community, insofar as it affects the kind of education which is provided in the urban situation. It will be my aim, in this examination of community service, to try to isolate some of the more basic facts.

Many teachers embark optimistically enough on programmes of community service without knowing much about the others employed in a community setting, and sometimes not even the local organizers of young volunteers. How many of these teachers realise that there is a small army of their fellows, who, working in a community setting, share their concerns? They voiced them in a recent report on the state of the community service by young people nationwide.

Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge help from all the sources noted in the article and also from my friend, Mrs Margaret Simey, for permission to quote her.

* *Community Service in Education.* Education Survey 20. London: HMSO. 50p.

'. . . there is a lack of thought and agreement over the functions of the community service. Is it a convenient means of filling the time of the lower ability groups, or has it got universal value which requires time, energy and resources ?'*

Perhaps we use the term 'community' far too much in education. We tend to call a school a 'community school' because it has some elasticity in the hiring arrangements for hall and sports facilities; or an imaginative programme of school-based adult education, or the appointment of community tutors, or someone similarly named, gives a community veneer to something which is essentially no more than a slight bending of the school's curriculum. Of course, there are many brave experiments in progress, and I must be careful to be selective in my fire. But, in the main, our various community school models have tended to be those which have enlarged the opportunities for use of the school buildings instead of the view of what education is all about. The community view of school may not be affected in the slightest by forays into the community, but only by involvement and identification with community aims. I believe that we cannot have community service without an equal involvement with education.

Before we can make sense of community service, we must see the school, not in geographical terms, but as an integral part of its community, and of the 'social knitting' of the area, with all that means in social, religious and economic terms. A school or college can succeed in community terms in proportion to its involvement in the real facts of local existence. Writing in *The Guardian* recently,† Alec Dickson said: 'Local industry could give to community service programmes a really significant reinforcement in technical skills that would convert them from sometimes rather anaemic bands of adolescent helpers into formidable instruments of neighbourhood betterment—developing equipment for the handicapped, converting derelict inner city areas into urban versions of outward bound. This concept of the school as a resource centre is much closer to the meaning of a community school'. This is also true of welcoming the elderly, handicapped and unemployed into schools, rather than going out to them, and relating the subject taught to the reality of community experience. So too is the growth of the individual, as he becomes more involved in understanding the needs and aspirations of other age groups, social groups and even other religious groups.

Community organizations

One of the first considerations in organizing the school's involvement in the community—for that is what I prefer to call

* National Youth Bureau Young Volunteer Resource Unit, 37 Belvoir Street, Leicester. *Initial Report*, January 1975.

† *The Guardian*, 12th February 1974. Dr A. C. Dickson, CBE, Honorary Director, Community Service Volunteers.

community service—is a knowledge of organizations and individuals with whose aims the school and its members can identify. It would be naive to suggest that merely listing them will effect change, but they form a significant list.

Volunteer bureaux. An increasing number of these are being set up under urban aid and other programmes. Organizers are usually social workers with an understandable suspicion of young volunteers who bring 'neither long-term commitment nor efficiency to the field in which they operate'. These bureaux form part of a country-wide operation backed by the recently established Volunteer Centre.*

Community service organizations.† Task Force in London boroughs, Young Volunteers or Youth Action in provincial towns and cities, or similar young volunteer organizations are now augmented by the National Youth Bureau's Young Volunteer Resource Unit. This collective approach to the problems faced by such local groups may bring a welcome coherence to this long divided field.

Community Service Volunteers.† Young Volunteer Force Foundation, International Voluntary Service, and other national bodies are well known and commented on in 'Community Service in Education'. Their associated advisory services may be well worth consulting, when new schemes are to be instituted. The locally based CSV who may be acting as organizer for the Age Concern Branch or for a neighbourhood youth group, should also be seen as a source of contact with the community. As a policy, Community Service Volunteers favour community service as an integral part of a subject approach, rather than as a subject in its own right (see SACK, School and Community Kits). YVFF sees its role as that of sponsor of locally based and financed projects in areas in which no local initiative has taken root. When such a local group is at work in your locality it can be a powerful ally and may act as the catalyst in a local situation. IVS, traditionally more concerned with student and work-camp action, is becoming increasingly concerned with community action.

Community development workers.‡ In too many cases, they are seen as opponents of the system of which the school is a part. The worker is represented by those who misunderstand his role as

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* The Volunteer Centre, 24 Nutford Place, London W1N 6AN.

† Young Volunteer Force Foundation, 7 Leonard Street, London EC2.
Task Force, Clifford House, Edith Villas, London W14.
Christian Education Movement, 'Annandale', North End Road, London.
NW11 Community Service Volunteers, 237 Pentonville Road, London.
N1 International Voluntary Service, 91 High Street, Harlesden, London.

‡ Community and Youth Service Association, 92 Bridgewater Street, Manchester.

someone who is inimical to the development of the community school. Yet community development itself is part of the total education programme, in that it encourages local people to become involved in the processes of decision making. Community workers, when they are appointed by local authorities, are intended to help local groups to articulate their needs and to focus attention on local circumstance. Such workers tend to see the role of the school in restricted terms, since there are few existing models of successful community schools. For schools and community workers to join forces would be an important step forward in the battle for understanding of what community service is about; an important part of the social knitting, in fact !

*Hospital voluntary help organizers.** An increasing number of area health authorities are appointing such workers, whose function is to make the best possible use of voluntary effort in the service of hospitals. An imaginative development is the increase in after-care help offered to patients on discharge by voluntary helpers. VHO's ask for a commitment to the task and absolute reliability—perhaps too demanding for some of the young people at school. But high standards are to be commended and aspired to, rather than abandoned. The organizer can be a help in explaining the complexity of work in hospital and the part that volunteers can play. It is interesting to note how many hospitals, especially those involved in mental health, use volunteers as 'humanizing' influences to combat institutionalization. I remember how, a few years ago, a young CSV took parties of young patients from the hospital into a local youth club. Now the traffic is two-way, between club and hospital.

Community action groups. These are often single-issue oriented, formed originally to combat authority in much the same way as 'anti-motorway', tree preservation or civic amenity bodies. They may even be so local as to be concerned with the fight to get a Panda crossing established, a pedestrian bridge built or an ancient building preserved. The school may benefit by fact-finding surveys to establish the basis of a case, or research into archives to uncover, say, the exact age of a monument. The reality of the work can be its major attraction to young people. A group of volunteers recently spotted a need for young mothers to leave their prams in safety at a shopping precinct at a time when a spate of baby snatches had made them nervous: the 'pram guard' mounted by the group earned general commendation.

Adventure playground leaders. Very often unsupported and isolated, these workers can offer a great deal of support to those

* National Association of Voluntary Help Organizers, c/o Farnborough General Hospital, Kent.

who are concerned to establish real community links. They operate at a very low level, yet it is a very real and effective level for the young people to whom they relate. Perhaps they have more in common with detached youth workers, with whom they share the counselling of those most in need of it. A two-way system of support and communication between school and play leader could lead to a sharing of resources with schools, equipment being repaired, extensions to the playground planned and carried out by the school, and the leadership, which often emerges in the informality of the playground, used in other constructive ways. It has always seemed to me that the misunderstanding of play organization is one of the crucial mistakes of formal education; the idea that play cannot be part of the process of education dies hard, and we may yet turn to the play leader for guidance in this field.

Community development projects. Most of these are set up in urban areas and have an educational element. Schools in the area are generally well aware of their existence, but there are lessons for all in the achievements of the projects, and it could be helpful to know what has been achieved in terms of integration of school into community. We know, for instance, that the Liverpool CDP* has a full-time education liaison officer as part of the project team. Has this led to a fuller identification of school with community? Such a worker could prove the forerunner of the educational link man who is needed to explore the fields of school involvement as part of the social knitting process.

This list is far from complete. It takes no account of the many voluntary organizations who have long been involved in community service, namely, councils of voluntary service, citizens advice bureaux, voluntary organizers attached to local social service departments, and so on. Every district has its own arrangements. One enquiry may be enough to set off a long trail of research which can have the most unexpected results. But I would suggest that the roundsman with his milk float, the policeman, the postman, the gas man and others who are unexpected, but nevertheless effective, social workers would provide important insights into the community which they serve.

Community involvement

But where are these explorations taking us? What is the point of having a picture of the community if all we do is examine it? Effective community service inevitably leads the individual towards involvement in the life and problems of the community. Effective, in this context, means service which touches the head and heart of the young people involved. Community service

* Community Development Project, c/o Vauxhall Services Centre, Saint Sylvester Street, Liverpool 3.

cannot exist in isolation. It can only be seen as one element in a process of involvement—involvement of the individual in a situation and involvement of the school in its community. I have a very clear memory of a girl, to all intents and purposes 'written off' by a school, but very deeply involved in work at a local hospital, saying to a fellow volunteer, 'You'd think they had enough sense to see that we don't need school. What we want is a job!' The same girl later went to a technical college to take a pre-nursing course. Her insight into the value of involvement took her into fields she would never otherwise have explored. The tutoring of children in lower parts of the school by older pupils, on similar lines to many of the American programmes, may be the first steps in the direction of involvement which could be used for the community's service in other ways.

School can be seen as a community resource. This is one of the rather pious statements made from time to time by those who are anxious to equate school with what they see as the community. But if we mean that school really is a community resource, then the demands made by the extensive linking of school to local groups, workers and organizations, not to mention industry and commerce, will be heavy. Workshop facilities will be in demand, home economics rooms will be needed to assist in the teaching of family skills, technical drawing offices will be used to prepare plans of local developments, art departments will meet the needs of local hospitals, every subject on the timetable will be expected to contribute its quota of community resource. The more open the school, the more real and more vital will be the demands.

I do not believe that community service should appear as a subject in its own right. It may form a very desirable element in all that a school may do. But if the school is in reality interpreting its local community, then every part will contribute to that interpretation. The subjects will contain the message. There is ample literature to demonstrate that every subject can, in fact, have a community service element. In this way, we can overcome the disservice that we do young people when we offer them a community service option in the fourth year, or suggest it as an alternative to games. Community service and the change in attitudes that it implies, transcends all organizational consideration.

To return to my starting point—social knitting. Knitting is an activity for people. I have listed some of the agencies and workers to whom the school can turn for guidance in the early stages of community involvement, since I have put on one side the concept of community service in isolation. Schools have a vital role to play in this. They are a vital and essential part of the community, but essential only because they contain people. People are the community.

The passage from school to further or higher education

The massive expansion of full-time education after school has more than doubled the places available in less than a decade.
What form of educational provision is best equipped to give students an accurate picture of the opportunities available in higher education ?

BRUCE CHOPPIN and JUDY DEAN

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The shape of our present higher education system is, in large measure, the result of the analysis carried out by the Committee on Higher Education under the chairmanship of Lord Robbins. This Committee, which reported in 1963,* redesigned the pattern of full-time education available to those over the age of 18, and indeed, proposed a massive expansion that more than doubled the number of places available to entering students in little more than a decade. The guiding principle to which they worked was that:

> 'Courses of higher education should be available for all those who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them and who wish to do so.' (Paragraph 31)

The Committee sat at a time when the main problem appeared to be the extreme pressure for places in higher education. There were far more qualified candidates for university courses than the system could accommodate, and the intense competition thus created was considered to be having detrimental effects on sixth form teaching. The Robbins Committee felt that some continued competition was 'inevitable' (and indeed 'desirable'), but they strove to design a system in which the degree of competition would certainly not increase, and would in time relax.

In the last 12 years, the specific Robbins recommendations that the provision for higher and further education should be increased, have almost all been implemented. The universities have been greatly expanded, particularly on the science and technology sides, and to these have been added 30 polytechnics which offer a wide range of courses at the degree and diploma levels, again with an emphasis towards science and technology. The number of students entering colleges of education has more than doubled since the publication of the Robbins Report, and

* *Higher Education.* Report by the Robbins Committee. London: HMSO, 1963.

there have also been very substantial increases in the provision for non-advanced further education.

The problems today

Today, the problems seem to have changed. Sixth forms did increase in size very rapidly during the 1960s (in fact, three times as rapidly as was predicted by Robbins) but this now appears to have levelled off, and there has been no real change in the proportion of the 17-year-old age-group staying on in school since 1971. There now appears to be a sufficient number of places in higher and advanced further education for all those academically qualified students who want them, but these places are not distributed exactly according to student demand. For example, there are almost twice as many students wishing to study at university each year as there are places available, and while some UCCA applicants fail because they do not obtain the necessary GCE passes, between 10 per cent and 20 per cent appear to be unsuccessful in their applications because of a shortage of places in the university sector (of course, most of these students could obtain places in colleges or polytechnics with little difficulty).

There is also a lack of balance between subjects. The rapid expansion of places in science and technology departments during the 1960s contrasts with the current swing away from these subjects in the sixth form. UCCA reports that, of those applying for university entry last September, there was a large surplus of well-qualified candidates for places to study English, Law and Medicine. At the same time, there were apparently more places available than suitable candidates to fill them for a wide range of scientific, engineering and technological courses and for business studies and modern language courses. For the most part, the provision of higher education must reflect society's perceived needs for trained manpower rather than the pendulum of the sixth-form fashion, but it is now widely believed that the expansion of science and technology departments in the late 1960s may have gone too far.

Stimulated in part by suggestions in the Robbins Report, several large-scale investigations into alternative methods of university selection have been carried out. When the competition for places in higher education was intense, such studies appeared to be very relevant, but now that the higher education system has more capacity to absorb the flow of students from the schools, it would seem appropriate to divert the extremely limited resources for educational research into other directions. In the last few years, the main interest has shifted from the efficient selection of students, to their direction into courses appropriate for their abilities and interests. A consequent problem, both for higher education and for the schools, is information. Entry requirements vary greatly between types of institution and even

between departments within a single institution. A great deal more is being done to get up-to-date information into the schools, and guidance facilities both for careers and higher education have been greatly improved. However, a recent NFER study* discloses that sixth formers who rely on their schools for the bulk of information on career choice and the selection of courses in higher education, are still mostly dissatisfied with the quality of this information. Hard pressed sixth-form tutors do not seem to have time to integrate the considerable amount of detailed information that they now receive, and it may be desirable that some specialist agency extends the help that is offered in this direction.

Best educational provision

What form of educational provision is best equipped to give students in the 16–19 age-group an accurate picture of the opportunities available in higher education and to offer them the most appropriate courses to prepare them adequately for higher education or employment?

Arrangements for 16–19 year-olds have been changing over the last decade. Until comparatively recently, the vast majority of this age-group in full-time education were either in grammar school sixth forms or following technical courses in colleges of further education. However, recent years have seen developments in both schools and further education which have blurred the distinction between the two sectors, and between the academic and technical streams.

A growing number of students from comprehensive, grammar and independent schools have, at the ages of 15 and 16, voluntarily left their schools in order to enrol for GCE courses at the local college of further education. Between 1966 and 1973, the number of students on full-time A-level courses in the FE sector more than doubled, while the number of such students in the schools sector increased by less than 30 per cent in the same period. By 1973, a third of all A-level candidates were studying in further education establishments, and one-sixth of all the home university entrants in that year were recruited from further education.

The reasons for this new trend are complex. When asked, many of the students explained that they had decided to move to the further education college because it offered them the possibility of studying a combination of A-level subjects that would not have been possible at school. This is particularly true for students from secondary modern or comprehensive schools. On the other hand, ex-grammar and independent school pupils frequently stressed the allegedly more adult atmosphere to be

* James, G. E. and Choppin, B. H. *The Decision to Teach.* Slough: NFER (In press).

found in college. Many of the students who moved, said they did so to escape the regulations and 'childishness' imposed on them by their schools.

Sixth formers appeared to be divided in their attitude to these rules and restrictions. Many protested about 'petty restrictions' and claimed that they would prefer the more 'adult' atmosphere of a further education college, others felt that the rules did them 'no real harm' and provided a convenient framework in which to study.

This new trend has imposed something of a strain on many further education colleges which have never regarded their GCE courses as forming more than a small part of their total activity. It has also led to a rather inefficient duplication of effort with many small A-level groups being taught where one or two larger ones would have sufficed.

One response of the local authorities to this situation has been the development of the sixth-form college—about 75 of which have been opened so far. There are, of course, arguments in favour of the sixth-form college system quite independent of what is happening in the further education sector. As secondary education is reorganized to a comprehensive pattern, local authorities try to make the best possible use of existing facilities, and ideas about optimum school sizes have been undergoing a change. In the past, large comprehensive schools have been considered necessary in order to provide enough senior pupils for a viable sixth form, but by collecting all the sixth-form pupils from a number of comprehensive schools and educating them centrally in a sixth-form college, the 11–16 comprehensives can themselves be made smaller. This has educational advantages as well as frequently fitting in with the scale of existing school buildings.

Although the sixth-form colleges are typically more broadly based than were traditional sixth forms, they still tend to concentrate on students taking academic courses and aiming for entry to higher education. Mention should therefore be made of another significant development in recent years—that of the tertiary college. This is a comprehensive college which is run under further education regulations and provides all the education within its catchment area for the 16–19 age-group. It is seen by its proponents as the logical extension of comprehensive secondary education, offering the widest possible choice of academic and vocational courses and tends to result in very large colleges in which only a comparatively small minority are planning to go on to higher education. Such institutions make an interesting contrast to the sixth-form college in that the academic streams do not predominate. By concentrating all the academic, vocational and technical education under one roof, the tertiary college may open up new horizons for students and make them aware, for example, of occupations and courses which they would never have considered as a school sixth former.

As yet, these new institutions are the subject of a great deal of controversy, and a major NFER research programme* is endeavouring to evaluate them in relation to the more usual type of sixth form. This evaluation will not only be in terms of the academic standards and examination results achieved by pupils in different institutions, as it is clear that important social and psychological factors are also involved. The traditionalist has argued that an important component of secondary education is the pastoral care that the staff can offer to maturing youngsters. It is said that a headmaster or headmistress really needs a period of six or seven years to get to know the pupils sufficiently well to be able to counsel them about their future. It follows that careers and guidance tutors at sixth-form colleges would not know their students well enough to give them adequate advice. Of course college staff, in general, do not agree.

When students are asked about the differences between school and college, a frequent theme is the control or management of younger children. Systems of 'prefects' or 'monitors' seem to be generally despised by those who have made the transition from school to a sixth-form college and yet are still prized by those in orthodox sixth forms as being among the major contributions of the 11–18 school. Whether organizing, managing, and disciplining younger pupils is a worthwhile activity for sixth-form students, and whether the effects on both younger and older children are beneficial or harmful, are among the questions being investigated by the NFER research programme.

Preparation for transition

A more important contrast, perhaps, between the different types of sixth form may be found in the way that each prepares its students for the transition to higher education. Although it has long been accepted that the sixth form organizes its teaching to prepare students for university study, much has been written about the inability of sixth formers to cope satisfactorily with the new pattern of study that the university demands. It is widely held that one of the functions of the sixth form is to develop a capacity for independent working, and this is usually developed by official periods of private study being built into the weekly timetable. A recent Schools Council Bulletin† advocates this provision of time for private study so that 'those who are proceeding to higher education will learn work habits that will be of permanent value to them'. The same bulletin reports complaints from sixth formers about the lack of guidance from staff in the techniques of private study, the inadequate space available in libraries, and the absence of separate private study areas. Although these shortcomings may occur in all types of institu-

* A preliminary report on Alternatives to the Traditional Sixth Form appears in *Educational Research*, 17, No. 3 (June 1975).

† 'Private Study in the Sixth Form'. *Schools Council Occasional Bulletin*, 1974.

tions, they would appear to be less problematic in a college especially geared to providing sixth form education.

It is clear that many apparently able students find the transition from school to university difficult. Wankowski,* writing about his experiences in counselling university students, diagnoses the problem convincingly:

> 'A consistent impression gained from this contact has been that in the process of transition from school to university many students (perhaps most) suffer greatly from sudden disorientation which is both social and academic. A prolonged state of such disorientation tends to mar progress and induces a sense of inadequacy.
>
> This loss of competence can often be traced to an unrealistic expectation that the nature of university tuition and thereby the style of the students learning will continue to be similar to that of the sixth form. This is of course, a largely erroneous assumption. In many if not in most university courses the tuition milieu is largely devoid of the most important element of efficient learning—that of immediate feedback of the teaching situation and it is precisely this component that has contributed to learning efficiency in schools in general and the sixth form in particular'.

McPherson,† in a paper which sought to explain the comparatively poor performance of Scottish as opposed to English first-year students at Edinburgh University, noted that in both the arts and the sciences the Scottish students on average reported that they had done much less private study during their final year than had the English. The Scots tended to rate their familiarity with, and capacity for, independent study lower than did the English. These factors appeared to be associated with the level of performance achieved at university.

It therefore appears that the basic issue is whether the drawbacks of a system that enforces a break at 16 are more than compensated for by its capacity to prepare students for the demands of higher education. It can be argued, perhaps, that a sixth-form college or tertiary college can be seen as a halfway house for such students, and that by imposing two breaks, at the ages of 16 and 18, rather than just one at the end of secondary school, we are weaning the students more gradually from a protective to an unprotective situation where he or she has to be more self-reliant. Changing institutions undoubtedly results in some break in the continuity of education, but it may be better for students to progress in a series of small steps, rather than to make a single large jump.

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* Wankowski, J. A. 'Teaching Methods and Academic Success in Sixth Form and University', *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 6 (May 1974).

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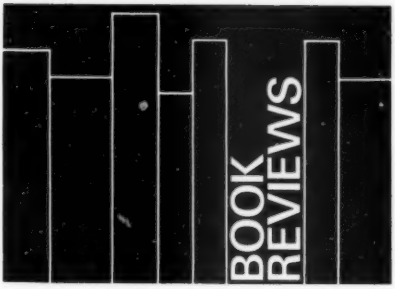

Purpose and practice in nursery education
Lesley Webb
Basil Blackwell £1·85

At a time when sociological researchers are doubting the value of nursery education as a compensation for social deprivation, it is refreshing to find a writer with no doubt about its strictly educational value for all children. Lesley Webb's statement of her case is at once forceful, stimulating and irritating. Chapters one, seven and eight seem to be addressed to administrators or fellow academics in teacher training in immediate reaction to the White Paper of December 1972 and in the belief that the Plowden Report (1967) would be implemented by the new government initiative. More than two years later the polemical style seems no longer entirely appropriate.

In chapters two to six, however, the reader is in the lecture room being led through a deep study of what nursery education is, or ought to be, about. The author draws upon a comprehensive knowledge of the results of research in Britain and America including relevant work from the nineteen thirties which modern writers might easily have overlooked. She sees education as essentially intrinsic, aiming, at any age, to increase the pupil's understanding, adequacy, discrimination and rational approach to the world and requiring, for successful implementation, the exercise of a teacher's trained professional expertise. Socialization, incorporating extrinsic or even moral education, is seen as initiation into the customs and values of a particular society. The nursery teacher is likely to find the two aims in conflict when deciding what degree of compliance is to be encouraged in the children and what attitudes to honesty, competitive practice, the social hierarchy and proprietary rights. The author herself clearly favours the educational aims and sees the great contribution of nursery education as increasing the independence of the young child whether or not others, or even other teachers, appreciate or value the results.

J. L. KAY

Development group work with adolescents
Leslie Button
University of London Press £2·10

Dr. Button writes 'Group work is about helping people in their growth and development', and later 'developmental work is especially concerned with building the social competence of the individual so that he becomes capable of dealing with his own problems'. His book is about the ways these aims may be achieved by work with small groups of adolescents. Although many people in Britain work mainly, or partly, with small groups there are still few books about group work in this country, and Dr. Button's latest book will be welcomed and widely read.

Besides dealing with group work theory and some techniques of group work practice, Dr. Button includes a good deal on adolescence, contemporary society and the wide range of settings in which group workers practise. I found the book most helpful when it dealt with specific techniques. The sections on sociometry and recording are useful and the suggestions about group enquiries and self-assessment particularly so. There is a lot of valuable material of this kind

throughout the book, and much of it would be especially helpful to teachers working with adolescents.

Some of the general material is less useful. The scope of the book is too wide for the 200 pages it comprises, and it is perhaps this which leads Dr. Button to make blunt assertions on matters where exploration and argument would be a better approach. I found it a book with good things in it rather than a good book, but because the language is plain and straightforward, the reader can easily select that which is of most value to him.

J. P. LEIGH

Religious education and the primary teacher
B. W. Hearn
Pitman Education Library £2·50
(£1·25 paperback)

What they never told you about RE
Terence Copley and Donald Easton
SCM Press £1·50

Since the first of these books sets out to cover the whole field of primary school religious education in some 130 pages, its account of the last twenty-odd years of debate and research is necessarily simple and brief. It is valuable for all that; the writer offers his reader (the intelligent woman class teacher as the preface suggests) a firm hand across the slippery slopes. Pointing out the dangers and pitfalls awaiting the thoughtless and unwary, he manages to ensure that at the end of it she emerges with nerve unshaken. At the same time the message is clear: success in the subject demands considerable effort in preparation and skill in practice. Most readers will welcome the practical advice in each section and the helpful end-of-chapter bibliographies; outline lesson notes look towards the student and inexperienced. Some will be disappointed, as I was, that discussion of the phenomenological approach is mainly restricted to a brief mention towards the end, and then largely in terms of the multicultural school under the heading 'Special Considerations'. Yet the book has the obvious merit of trying to answer the questions its readers are likely to be asking, at the same time insisting on the regularity and thoroughness of religious education in the junior school and the need for progression and development in the subject.

The same emphasis upon the need for careful preparation, understanding of sources and sheer teaching skill is at the heart of the second book. On the face of it this is a bracingly irreverent romp through the secondary school department designed to show that religious education can be fun for teacher and pupil alike. It deserves to be taken seriously. Matters phenomenological are given broad and sympathetic treatment; there is a good deal of practical advice about method and content and it is useful to find discussion of topics like the value of examination work. This book will appeal immediately to the younger teacher. Some readers will find it self-conscious in places, some will not emerge unscathed, but many will enjoy it and most will be helped by it. I was pleased to find in the select bibliography mention of Michael Grimmitt's *What can I do in RE?* published earlier in 1974 by Mayhew-McCrimmon, and one of the best books on the subject of late.

JOHN GOULDING

Children's reading interests:
Schools Council Working Paper 52
Frank Whitehead, A. C. Capey
and Wendy Maddren
Evans/Methuen £0·55

It is always most gratifying to discover that research workers confirm views that one has held for many years and it is even more gratifying that when they express views with which one disagrees, these views are prefaced by such non-scientific assertions as, 'moreover, there are grounds for believing that'.

Thus to have it confirmed that 'boys tend to read less than girls', 'heavy viewers (of TV) read significantly less than light viewers', or 'the amount of reading a child does might seem, therefore, to be one manifestation of his general temperament, personality, life-style and life-situation', or 'there is a relationship between 'ability and attainment and amount of reading' one is being carried along on an euphoric cloud of 'I told you so's'. The 'moreover, there are grounds for believing that, where it exists, this habit of wide, independent reading has a massive influence for the good on the child's mastery of the written patterns of his language' proposition can be rightly ignored as doubling up, from a different angle, the previous suggestions.

A reluctance to accept such assertions is redoubled when one is brought face to face with the categorization of books into 'narrative' and 'non-narrative' and 'quality' and 'non-quality'. The fact that *Black Beauty* tops the reading lists for 10 plus and, even more surprising that *Little Women* tops the list for both 12 plus and 14 plus, places the whole of the research in some doubt as far as one reader is concerned. Admittedly the influence of girls' reading as opposed to boys' might help such titles, but what about the influence of teachers, parents and in the case of these two titles, recent exposure on television? School libraries account for 34 per cent of reading, public libraries 20 per cent, and consequently children's reading interests are being screened by adult readers of a different generation.

In some schools we were enormously impressed by the way in which individual teachers with an informed enthusiasm for books and what they have to offer were succeeding in leading pupils of no more than average ability to attempt reading of high quality that was nevertheless intensely enjoyed.

This quotation puts the background of the research into perspective but it may obscure children's reading interests. *Skinhead* and Enid Blyton surface occasionally to be savaged by the researchers. One may agree with their strictures on the former but the latter, it could be argued, has done more to promote children's reading than any other single adult. These books definitely interest children, despite the antipathy they arouse in their educators.

Anyone concerned with children's books will be interested in this interim statement and will be awaiting the fuller report. 'Non-narrative' it certainly is, 'quality' or 'non-quality' only the reader can judge. If your reviewer were to say that he rates it higher than *The Secret Garden* but lower than *Incredible Adventures of Professor Branestawn*, firstly you will have to read the pamphlet, and secondly you will be brought face to face with problems of categorization implicit in this approach to children's reading interests, to know what he means.

P. B. RATTENBURY

Education of travelling children:
Schools Council Research Studies
Christopher Reiss
Macmillan £4·75

Precious few facts are widely known about those families who choose to follow a nomadic way of life or of the educational measures adopted for their children, and it is this lack of real information that gives credence to what are hearsay, half-truths and plain prejudice. Christopher Reiss throws light on a small, dark corner of the education canvas and reveals the wide-spread non-attendance and educational deprivation of most gypsy children. His research was conducted single-handed with the original intention of helping teachers facing the immediate problems of teaching travellers. However, following a survey of local education authorities, the return of detailed questionnaires from schools, visits to those which seemed

to have the most to offer in terms of experience and close contact with travelling parents throughout the country, it became clear that the school system was reaching little more than 10 per cent of the children and was seemingly incapable of solving problems which were, to a large extent, political and social in nature. The result is a book aimed at administrators as much as teachers and one that should be studied by all fair-minded people, particularly those concerned with social policy, community relations and educational research.

The slow progress of the 1968 Caravan Sites Act to provide adequate accommodation for gypsies has meant that many travelling families are still on unauthorized sites or at the roadside where special help and education is denied them. Where schooling is provided the initiative has often come from voluntary bodies, and success has been largely with younger children. More radical, far-reaching proposals are needed for secondary-aged travellers who have important economic roles within the family. Mr. Reiss concludes that many gypsy parents want education for their children, but he questions the flexibility of the maintained system to provide for a nomadic people with characteristic irregularity of attendance, seasonal comings and goings and multiple attendance at several schools. It is a challenge that a fair society must be seen to be facing without crushing the identity of a distinctive social group.

D. G. BUCKLAND

How to set up a free school
White Lion Street Free School, London
40p

The term free school is ambiguous. This booklet, sub-titled a handbook of alternative education, comes from a school styled 'free' which states its aim of becoming 'a model of a community-accountable institution which LEAs must in the end support'. At present it seems to be financially dependent on charitable foundations and a borough council. But what makes it go is obviously the courage and practical ability of those who chose to set it up. One problem that had to be faced was whether the law of the land permitted them to do what they wanted to do. It turned out that it did and the booklet will be of immense advantage to others seeking guidance on the running of independent schools. The contents of this booklet would be every bit as useful to all such schools whether their progenitors shared the educational philosophy of White Lion Street or not.

After dealing with law and law enforcement ('we do not recommend saying to hell with all those pages of legal rubbish . . . and just starting up an open house for children'), the booklet advises on premises, fire precautions, hygiene, insurance, charitable status and sources of finance. There are useful sections on keeping accounts, paying staff, preparing a school meal and persuading manufacturers to donate equipment. But apart from its utility, the style and tone, indeed the point of view disclosed, make this a publication worth the attention of all who concern themselves about education. At times naive (incredulity is expressed about some independent schools being in it for the money), at times inaccurate, but only in minor matters, this is a genuine attempt to help those who want to help the kind of children who reject the schools for which we all pay and are likely to prosper only under conditions which public authorities might have difficulty in creating.

D. M. HOPKINSON

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